

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
REDUCTION IN FORCE POLICIES FOR
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

By

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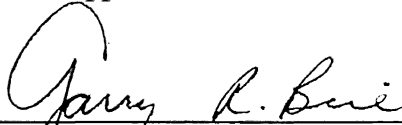
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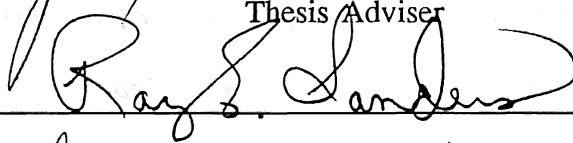
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
December, 1993

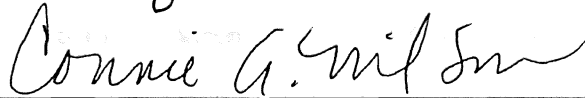
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Thesis Approved:



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude for my committee members Dr. Ray Sanders and Dr. Connie Wilson for their willingness to be involved in this endeavor. Special thanks to my committee chair, Dr. Garry Bice. Without his mentoring and guidance this project would surely not have reach fruition. Also, thanks to Dr. Edward Johnson, Dean of Libraries, for his support of this and other academic endeavors.

I want to thank my parents, Jerry and Winona Wilhm for their financial and emotional support. I wouldn't have finished without them. And last, but not least, my husband Maurice and my children Carrie and Cristie. For their patience and understanding in allowing me the opportunity to complete this degree.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Technology is changing conditions of work. Those changes can be observed and are experienced in the work place. The changes generally occur over an extended period of time, e.g., when the computer was first introduced in the business world following World War II, more than 40 years ago. Technological changes will normally affect the first-generation employee more noticeably than subsequent generations of employees (Sibson, 1992).

Likewise, the higher education community is experiencing an explosion of technological advances. Academic libraries at colleges and universities across the United States are experiencing similar phenomenon. With the advent of the on-line card catalog, automated circulation and acquisitions systems, sophisticated networking capabilities, and complex data bases, the complexion of the academic library is indeed changing rapidly. Tasks once completed painstakingly by hand, are now generated through integrated, automated systems. Therefore, the major function of most library positions has changed drastically or, in some cases, no longer exists.

The costs of technological advances can be monumental in terms of human resources devoted to such activities as training, planning, and maintaining library systems. Training activities include not only staff integration but patron education as well. In addition, reluctance by both patrons and staff members to pending change

can diminish valuable human resources. Planning, in terms of selection of vendor, system, etc., can exhaust human resources at all levels in the organization.

Maintaining the actual system can mean additional staff persons to the already maximized library budget. Finally, the expenditures associated with hardware and software can be a major determinant in a library's budget. It can take an academic library years to successfully complete the automation process. Thus, further stretching the limitations of a tight budget.

The nation's troubled economy continues to impact state appropriations for higher education and, in turn, library budgets and services. However, libraries, by scope and mission, face a commitment to patrons to maintain a consistent level of services in terms of hours, materials, and personnel. "Soaring costs, squeezed budgets, service cuts, personnel layoffs, and library closings are steadily increasing in the library community" (Online Computer Library Center, Inc., 1991, p.4).

College and university academic libraries continue to face serious problems in terms of economic shortfalls, escalating costs of materials, and pressure to implement and maintain new technologies, which replace labor-intensive activities. Thus, a need exists to reduce and reallocate human resources. The academic library community has been confronted with this situation for a relatively short period of time.

Therefore, a study should be completed to provide academic libraries with a useful, up-to-date resource for consideration in development of reduction in force policies.

Problem

Basically, libraries can improve the quality of their services through automated systems, acquisitions or human resources. Deteriorating economic bases and the costs of technological advances have forced academic libraries to face critical budget

problems, in many cases resulting in a reduction in staff. The problem is that there are no personnel guidelines available to provide guidance to library administrators who are faced with a reduction of staff in their academic library settings.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide a foundation for development of reduction in force policies for academic libraries.

Objectives

The following objectives were developed to provide guidance to the study:

1. Solicit existing policies from Association of Research Libraries relative to reduction in force.
2. Review the policies to identify existing criteria.
3. Determine if administrators in Association of Research Libraries believe current reduction in force policy adequately addresses needs.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were basic to the conduct of the study:

1. Because of the priorities in academic libraries to maintain the collection and a commitment to technology, human resources are the only entity of the library budget available for financial reduction.
2. To maintain standing in the Association of Research Libraries acquisitions and/or services cannot be diminished.

Limitations

The following limitations are applicable to this study:

1. Only academic research libraries were utilized for the purpose of this study, i.e., public libraries were not included.
2. Implications from the study may not be applicable to public libraries due to the unique nature of academic libraries.

Definitions

Reduction in Force (RIF). A term used primarily by the Federal government meaning to downsize the work force (Levinson, 1987). RIF is used interchangeably with layoff throughout this study.

Association of Research Libraries (ARL). An organization consisting of 120 academic research libraries at public and private institutions (Association of Research Libraries, 1993).

Scope

The study dealt with human resources in the 93 members of the Association of Research Libraries in the United States of America during 1993.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature focused on the topics personnel policies including federal agencies, the private sector, and higher education. In addition, economic considerations for academic libraries, faculty/staff profile, and previous studies were reviewed.

Personnel Policies

Federal Agencies

Reduction in force in the Federal Government is identical to a layoff in the private sector. Federal Government RIFs are administered through the Office of Personnel Management. In organizing work forces for RIF purposes, agencies first establish competitive areas, based on agency organization and location, and group employees by those competitive areas. This may encompass all or part of an agency. Within the competitive areas, positions are grouped by competitive levels, i.e., grouping together jobs in the same grade and classification series that are so similar in work requirements that employees could move from one to another without needing significant training and without disrupting the agency's work program. A major

factor in determining competitive levels is identification of critical need positions. Next agencies determine employees' retention standing within the competitive levels by tenure of employee, i.e., (1) career employees; (2) career-conditional employees and all employees serving probationary periods; and (3) employees serving under a variety of nonstatus, nontemporary appointment authorities, veterans status, length of service, and performance. Within each of these categories, employees are given credit based on seniority and performance. A RIF can affect employees in any of four ways: (1) involuntary separation; (2) demotion; (3) furlough for more than 30 days; or (4) reassignment requiring displacement of another employee, i.e., employees have bumping rights based on credits and may move downward three grade levels (Levinson, 1987).

Private Sector

With the current state of the nation's economy, it is difficult not to be directly or indirectly affected by a layoff in the business and industrial sector. Both as consumers and employees, Americans experience the repercussions of corporate layoffs daily.

While capital and labor are often cast as eternal foes, their relationship is essentially cooperative. Though amended by legislation, union contracts, and innumerable other factors, the laws of supply and demand still apply. Simply put, companies hire in good times, fire during period of decline (Bohl, 1988, p. 53).

There is no typical layoff per se. Innumerable factors can affect a layoff, e.g., the number of current, vacant positions; redeployment of employees; potential early retirements; or voluntary resignations (Bohl, 1988).

Demassing. There are two distinctively different routes an organization can select when considering reduction in force. One is the tendency toward downsizing through a process known as demassing. Basically, demassing consists of a relatively large decrease in staff (5 to 15 percent); widespread cutbacks that affect many, if not all, divisions and departments; deep reductions that usually cover several levels of the organization; priority on lowering costs by lowering head count; and emphasis on completing the program as quickly as possible. IT&T, RCA, and Kodak, to name a few, have experienced demassing recently. Although demassing achieves the objective of a quick fix for reducing costs; many consequences will plague the organization and its employees utilizing that approach. The cost to those affected directly by demassing is clear. However, those remaining in the organization also experience problems such as reduced morale, guilt over having to terminate subordinates, resentment towards the organization, and increased workloads (Tomasko, 1990).

Planned Downsizing. In contrast, planned downsizing has broader objectives than does demassing. The objectives for planned downsizing include: (1) Lowering costs - minimizing non-salary as well as salary expenses; (2) Faster decision making - specifying in advance which decisions are to be made, how long they now take to be made, and what the target times are for making them in a more streamlined structure; (3) Quicker response to competitors' actions; (4) Less distorted communications - a combination of management-layer reduction and investment in computer networks; (5) greater action-orientation, less analysis-paralysis - reduce the role of the headquarters staff in decision making while utilizing staff and line management to make decisions; (6) Greater diffusion of new ideas - innovation; (7) Facilitating synergies within the

company - reduce the number of divisions and departments that need to interact then limit the hierarchy; (8) Higher general manager morale - involve staff groups in decision making; (9) Focus on customer needs not internal procedures; (10) Give authority to managers closest to customers - can be the result of reduction in management layers; (10) Easier ways to pinpoint individual responsibility - responsibility for economic performance should not be lost among overlapping layers of managers; and (11) Increased management productivity - Increase the number of people reporting to each manager (Tomasko, 1990).

General Electric and Shell Oil Company have taken a planned downsizing approach to reshaping their organizations. Planned downsizing places more emphasis on alternative cost-cutting methods. Human resources are considered for reduction as a last resort; and then early retirement, job redeployment, job sharing, voluntary layoffs are considered as options (Bohl, 1988).

Five principles gleaned from a large number of successful downsizers are:

1. Start before you have to.
2. Prepare for the downside. Mean and lean calls for a new management style which won't be embraced by all employees.
3. Use a rifle, not a shotgun. Don't make across the board cuts. Target downsizing efforts toward specific employees or units. Planned downsizing means strategically eliminating employees based upon the results you are seeking.
4. Continually manage size and shape.
5. Go after more than costs and jobs. Tie the process to long-term strategic plans that tell you what you want to achieve through the downsizing. (Bohl, 1988).

Tomasko (1990) provided an implementation path to downsize a corporation from fat and bloated to lean and mean as illustrated in Figure 1.

Higher Education

Large reductions in force in the higher education community are a relatively new occurrence. Until recently, higher education has enjoyed a utopian existence in terms of funding, status, etc. Many factors are affecting higher education funding such as the national economy, a smaller population of college-aged persons, and a general distrust of government by the American people. For example, Oregon's state tax system requires the state to make up the shortfall in the K-12 funding and community colleges from its general fund, leaving higher education, transportation, and other state programs in the lurch. Thus, when Measure Five was passed lowering the rate of assessment on property tax, higher education in the state was in deep trouble. The higher education system was given three to four weeks to achieve a 10 percent reduction. Primary considerations were sustainability of the higher education system and duplication of academic programs. Public input was sought from students, faculty, and staff relative to programs to be cut and/or eliminated. The provost identified programs for reduction or elimination. The result was that student enrollment was capped; tuition was increased; many programs, degrees, and/or departments were decreased significantly or eliminated; and several hundred staff and faculty members were laid off. Likewise, the library was expected to take its share of the budget reduction. Naturally, that action resulted in low employee morale, increased faculty early retirements, and difficulty attracting qualified candidates for faculty and staff positions. In retrospect, higher education

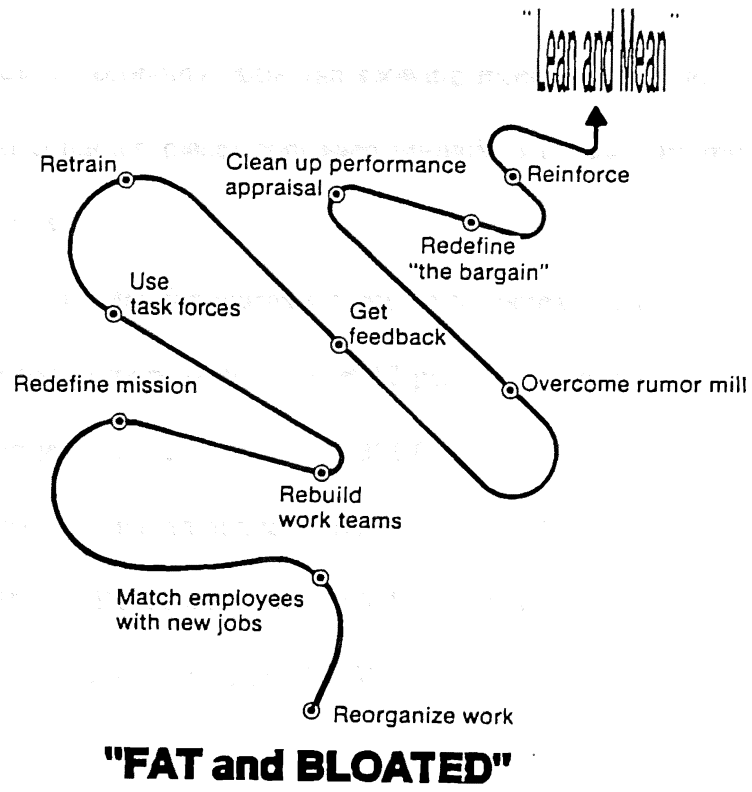


Figure 1. Mapping an Implementation Path

officials in Oregon are reviewing the process. They are developing a budget emergency plan to have available (Raths, 1991).

Economic Considerations for Academic Libraries

External Forces

The nation's economy, although showing recent signs of growth, remains stagnant. That condition places continued limitations on state appropriations for academic libraries.

Subscription rates for journals continue to increase markedly. The rates for 1993 are expected to increase by at least 12 percent due to publisher price increases, according to projections developed by EBSCO Subscription Services. Cancelling subscriptions has become an annual event in the life of an academic library. For example, in 1992, ARL Libraries cancelled more than 60,000 subscription collectively (Association of Research Libraries, 1993).

Internal Factors

The budget more than any other single document, discloses the real character of a library. It defines priorities, exposes problems, and reveals how it is facing the future. It has been demonstrated that most academic library budgets look remarkably alike, fostering the assumption that this gave them some larger validity.

Traditionally, library budgets have long been represented 60 percent for staff, 30 percent for materials, and 10 percent for other. With the increasing pressure to automate, some suggest that the new library budget should be 33 percent staff, 50 percent materials/access, and 17 percent for other. Such a dramatic shift in budgeting

calls for difficult changes. The most obvious of those is that library administration must make good on the library world's initial promise to derive cost savings from the use of automation (Campbell, 1989). Library budgets have tended to increase less rapidly than other university expenditures; while the library's percentage of total expenditures has tended to decline. When measured against U.S. Department of Education figures for educational and general expenditures (E&G) by universities, library budgets took an increasingly large share of the university budget through the 1960s, leveled out through the 1970s, and have actually declined through the 1980s to the point where they have lost almost all the ground gained in the last thirty years (Cummings, Witte, Bowen, Lazarus, & Ekman, 1992).

Academic libraries at prestigious universities are taking drastic measures to maintain current levels of service, i.e., Stanford, in order to save \$3.1 million over the next few years, is considering, among other options, laying off 10 percent of their staff; Yale's Sterling Memorial Library needs tens of millions of dollars in physical repairs; and Florida Atlantic University's library budget was reduced to \$1.3 million from \$3.1 million in only two years. Libraries canceled 1550 of 5200 serial subscriptions in an effort to accommodate those cuts (Brinkman, 1992).

Faculty/Staff Profile

ARL Libraries are generally similar in terms of organizational structure. Most have some variation in the areas of technical services, public services, collection development and/or fiscal and personnel affairs. The ratio of support staff to faculty is generally 2:1 in smaller academic libraries and can be as high as 4:1 in larger libraries (Stueart, 1981).

Librarians

There are differences among ARL Libraries when considering status of librarians. More than 25 percent of ARL Libraries support librarians in tenure-track faculty positions. They are considered the equivalent of their faculty colleagues within the academic community. However, rather than assuming a primary teaching or research assignment, they generally provide public service to patrons and "behind the scenes" service in terms of technical services such as cataloging books, monitoring serials, and maintaining library systems. Another 35 percent support librarians in a quasi-faculty status position, i.e., partial benefits, academic status - no benefits, non-tenure track, etc. The remainder of the ARL Librarians are considered professional staff and receive benefits and support similar to the administrative staff (Association of Research Libraries, 1980).

Support Staff

The support staff in ARL Libraries function in similar fashions. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, supervision of large cadres of student assistants, public service in the general reference area, and technical support of librarianship. Student assistants make up the largest portion of the library staff in terms of head count. They provide reshelving assistance, circulation services, and miscellaneous clerical support.

Labor Unions

Both sectors of the library population, librarians and support staff, are subject

to representation by a labor union in some ARL Libraries, e.g., National Education Association.

Previous Studies

In 1987, the American Management Association conducted a study regarding downsizing and outplacement of 1,134 corporations in the industrial sector ranging in size from \$500,000,000 plus in annual sales to less than \$50,000,000 in annual sales. Approximately one-half of the respondents had reduced their workforce in the past 18 months, displacing some 173,800 employees. The most important recommendation cited by survey participants was to be well prepared for a major reduction in force, i.e., start early before the crisis occurs, have a current, up-to-date policy in place to implement the reduction process, and maintain aggressive outplacement services. Although the majority of those surveyed agreed that the reduction in force for the manufacturing sector had indeed "bottomed out" so to speak, the factors attributed to the reduction trend remained constant: (1) global competition, (2) reassessment of staff and support needs, (3) changes in products and services, and (4) increases in technology and automation. However, now that many American corporations have experienced reductions, they are selecting more sophisticated options, cutting away at excess and making reductions in force more an option of last resort. In addition, American corporations are: (1) increasing the efficiency of the workforce, (2) evaluating inventory concepts such as "just-in-time", (3) moving towards a self-directed workforce, (4) reevaluating work space, (5) reevaluating options for transport, (6) automating routing administrative functions, (7) reevaluating options for transport, and (8) considering compromise labor cost reductions, such as job sharing and work sharing (Bohl, 1988).

Summary

The Federal Government's policy on reduction in force is straight forward and applicable to all government agencies. It is administered by the Office of Personnel Management, thus, assuring uniformity. The private sector generally has had more experience with reductions in force, as evidenced by the volumes of material available on the subject. However, different approaches and strategies exist relevant to the reductions. In contrast, the higher education community has had little exposure to this problem until recently.

Many factors are considered in the economic climate of academic libraries. For example, escalating costs of materials, stagnant or diminished budgets, and a reluctance to change budgeting strategies.

The staff profile of most ARL libraries is relatively similar. Librarians maintain either a faculty or administrative/professional role while support staff are comprised of para-professionals and clericals. Labor unions are also a factor in the profile of the academic library.

An exceptional study of business and industry, conducted by the American Management Association in 1988, was utilized for foundation of this study in terms of development of the questionnaire, classification of appropriate terminology, and identification of trends and expectations.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design combined qualitative and quantitative methods, i.e., review of reduction in force policies of members of the Association of Research Libraries and administration of a survey instrument to personnel officers in Association of Research Libraries.

Population

The Association of Research Libraries' members in the United States of America (N=93) were utilized as the sample and population. Five broad criteria are utilized to assess membership for the Association of Research Libraries including: staff, volumes, salaries and wages, operating budget, and borrowing and lending. There are more than 3,000 academic libraries nationwide, yet only 108 are qualified for membership in the ARL (15 members are outside of the United States of America).

Survey Instrument

A researcher-developed survey was utilized to solicit information from the

population. The survey instrument was developed through the issues identified in the review of literature and the objectives of the study. Specifically, the American Management Association Research Report on Downsizing and Outplacement was the source of the questions relating to criteria utilized and layoff options. Questions focused on background information, opinions relative to current policies, and reduction in force criteria.

Validation of Data Collection Instrument

Content validity was ascertained through soliciting information from Oklahoma State University library administrators (N=4), personnel officers in the field (N=5), and issues identified through the Review of Literature. Minor editorial changes were made in the instrument following the content validity process. Institutional Review Board approval was solicited and received. A copy is included as Appendix A.

Data Gathering Techniques

The surveys were mailed to personnel officers in ARL libraries on June 1, 1993. Participants were asked to return surveys as soon as possible. A cover letter served to introduce the topic, solicit participation, assure confidentiality, request current applicable policies, and provide an opportunity for information sharing, if desired. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was enclosed to enhance successful return rate. A follow-up letter was mailed July 5, 1993. A copy of the survey instrument and letters is contained in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

Frequency count and descriptive statistics, i.e., mean, median, mode, and

standard deviation, were utilized to quantify data received through the questionnaire. Qualitative methods were utilized to review policy statements. Specifically, major concepts, i.e., headings or ideas, of the statements were identified. Subsequently, a detailed synopsis of the major concepts was developed through selecting those aspects of the policy statement which provided information in a clear, concise manner.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to provide a foundation for development of reduction in force policies for academic libraries. A survey instrument was distributed to personnel officers in Association of Research Libraries in the United States of America (N=93). A 63 percent return rate was achieved (59 of 93 surveys were returned). To substantiate findings and enhance recommendations, reduction in force policies were requested.

Survey Results

Background Information

The first group of questions was designed to gather background information relative to the library in question. The questions required a yes or no response. Question 1 dealt with the presence of labor union representation in the institution's academic library. The majority of academic libraries were not represented by a labor union, i.e., 62.7 percent. However, of those represented by a labor union, 28.8 percent of the institutions had either two different unions representing support staff and librarians or one group with representation and one group without. The labor

union selected most often by respondents was the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (N=10). A complete listing of labor unions mentioned by respondents is provided in Appendix B. Table I provides a summary of the information relative to labor union presence in academic libraries.

The next two questions were designed to garner information relative to the library's long-term strategy and short-term policy for personnel layoffs. A large majority of libraries in the survey did not have a long-term reduction in force strategy, i.e., 62.7 percent. And, surprisingly, only 27.1 percent of respondents had a short-term policy for personnel layoffs. Table II summarizes responses to questions 2 and 3.

Comments associated with this question included but were not limited to:

- "We are maintaining vacancies to avoid layoffs."
- "We are downsizing - so far it has been effective."
- "We are using attrition instead of layoffs."
- "I'm not sure a policy exists."
- "This library has no layoff policy."

Question 4 stated, "Librarians and support staff are governed by separate layoff policies." Specifically, 34 respondents (57.63 percent) selected yes; 17 respondents (28.81 percent) selected no; and 8 (13.56 percent) did not respond.

Question 5 asked whether the layoff policy had been utilized by the library. Seventeen institutions (28.81 percent) responded yes; 38 respondents (64.41 percent) selected no; and 4 (6.78 percent) did not respond.

Table I
Number and Percent of ARLs With Labor Unions

	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes (All Staff - One Union)	4	6.8%
No (All Staff)	37	62.7%
Yes (Split*)	17	28.8%
No Response	<u>1</u>	<u>1.7%</u>
Total	59	100.0%

*Librarians and support staff are represented by different labor unions.

Table II
Number and Percent of ARLs With Specific Components of Layoff Policies

The library at this institution has a long-term strategy for personnel layoffs.

	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	16	27.1%
No	37	62.7%
No Response	<u>6</u>	<u>10.2%</u>
Total	59	100.0%

The library at this institution has a short-term policy for personnel layoffs.

Yes	21	35.6%
No	31	52.5%
No Response	<u>7</u>	<u>11.9%</u>
Total	59	100.0%

Adequacy of Current RIF Policy

The next series of statements were designed to elicit the respondent's opinion relative to layoffs and policies. A seven-point likert scale was used with 1 representing strongly disagree, 4 representing neutral, and 7 representing strongly agree. Table III summarizes responses to questions 6 through 9.

Librarian Status

Respondents were provided four options when asked "Please select statement which most accurately reflects librarian status at your institution." Figure 2 graphically displays responses.

It is interesting to note that parallel received as many responses as tenure-track faculty. However, the number of tenure-track faculty libraries has increased from the 1980 figure of 25 percent (Association of Research Libraries, 1980).

Criteria Utilized in Layoff Decision-Making Process

Respondents were next asked to select all applicable criteria used in the organization's layoff process. The categories provided for selection were: (1) seniority; (2) function/responsibility; (3) title or rank; (4) performance; and (5) other. Forty-one responses were received for this question. The number of times each criterion was selected is displayed in Figure 3. Note that respondents were provided an opportunity to select as many criteria as were applicable.

Table III
 Respondents Attitudes Relative to Adequacy of Current Layoff Policy

<u>Question</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>S</u>
The current layoff policy adequately meets the needs of the library.	4.5	4	4	.2953
The library is well-prepared to implement a major layoff.	3.3	4	4	.22
It is likely that the library will face a major layoff during 1993.	1.9	1	1	1.4
The term of notice of a layoff decision used by this library is adequate.	5	5	4	1.49

Likert Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree

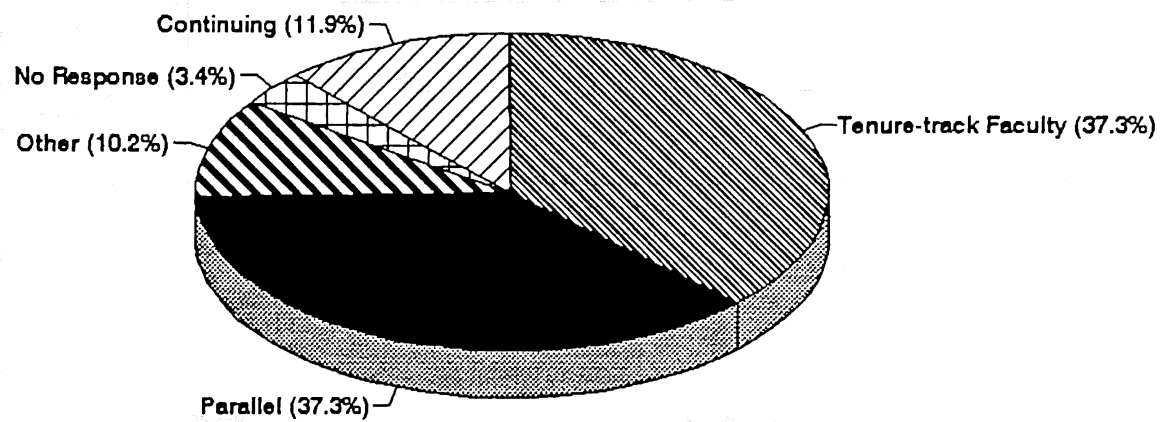
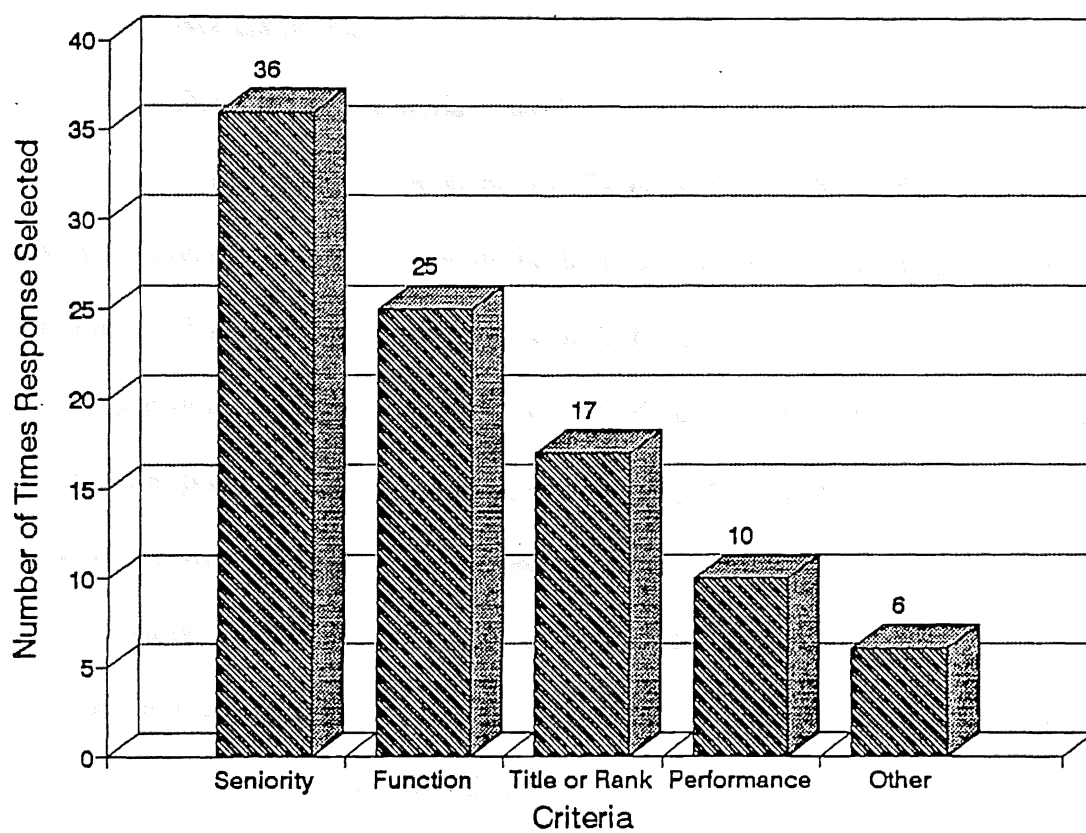


Figure 2. Librarian Status



Note: Respondents were provided the opportunity to respond as many times as was applicable.

Figure 3. Criteria Utilized in RIF Decision-Making

"No response" was selected by 18 respondents. Comments associated with this question regarding no response included:

- "Criteria varies"
- "Don't have one"
- "Not applicable"
- "Don't know if criteria exists"

Question 12 asked respondents to "Please indicate which of the following, if any, your organization would initiate in the event of a layoff. (You may select more than one.)" The results are summarized in Table IV.

Question 13 asked respondents to provide the number of weeks notice the organization provides employees designated for layoff. Responses ranged from one week to one year. Two weeks was selected most often (N=7).

Finally, Question 14 requested additional information the respondents felt might aid in the development of reduction in force policies. Although few comments were received, a few are worth noting.

"Avoid a policy based strictly on seniority within library as a whole"

"The library has no policy. We had one for a brief period in 1990-91."

"Freeze vacancies and create vacancies, then transfer staff."

Reduction in Force Policies

Twenty-eight reduction in force policies were received from twenty institutions. The policies were reviewed and key concepts identified. Those concepts are summarized below.

Table IV
Layoff Options/Alternatives Reported by Respondents

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>
Early Retirement	27	Severance Extension	3
Job Redeployment/Retraining	23	Health Benefits Extension	8
Job Sharing	8	Salary Reduction	7
Voluntary Layoffs	16	Union/Management Committee	3
Outplacement Service (Selective)	11	Union Renegotiation	4
Outplacement Service (All)	6	FTE Reduction	19
Other	2		

Note: Respondents were provided the opportunity to respond as many times as was applicable.

Definition of a Reduction in Force

The definition included parameters, conditions and limitations of the reduction in force. For example, "A reduction in force is a separation from employment or reduction in percentage of appointment because of budgetary reasons or lack of work which may be caused by reasons such as programmatic change or reorganization.

This action may be indefinite or temporary" (University of California at Berkeley Policy Manual, 1992).

Term of Notice of Layoff Decision

The number of calendar days the institution must provide the employee prior to layoff.

Procedures for Reduction in Force

Examples of procedures included:

- (1) Criteria utilized for decision-making i.e., seniority, rank, title, performance, or function.
- (2) Entities or individuals responsible for decision making.
- (3) Options for transfer within the organization.
- (4) Rank order of layoff, i.e., part-time, full-time, etc.
- (5) Date layoff will occur including last day of active work and pay.
- (6) Entities or individuals the layoff will affect.

Recall/Reemployment Regarding Employees Affected by RIF

- (1) The order and circumstances, in which laid off employees are called back to work.

- (2) The term employees remain on recall status.
- (3) Conditions under which termination of recall may occur.
- (4) The existence of preferential rehire.
- (5) Reinstatement of leave and seniority upon recall.

Extension of Benefits

Benefits sections included the extension of insurance, leave, etc. The employee's and employer's responsibilities were provided.

Placement Service Available for RIF Affected Employees

A description of internal and external placement services was included. The employee's and employer's responsibilities were detailed.

Unique Aspects of RIF Policies

Several RIF policies contained unique aspects. Some provided the institution's alternatives to RIF. For example, planned downsizing and attrition were two mechanisms cited by respondents. Another unusual component was buyout. Basically employees were offered a certain amount of money, based on years of service, as an alternative to layoff.

Also, those libraries with union contracts provided a bumping rights option, i.e., based on seniority, employees had the right to bump other employees out of equal or lower positions.

Finally, one policy provided a psychological profile of all employees involved in a RIF i.e., the supervisor, the laid-off employee, and the remaining employees. This was provided to assist supervisors in the process.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

College and university academic libraries continue to face serious problems in terms of economic shortfalls, escalating costs of materials, and pressure to implement and maintain new technologies. Thus, a need exists to reduce and reallocate human resources. The academic library community has been confronted with this situation for a relatively short period of time. Therefore, a study was completed to provide academic libraries with a useful, up-to-date resource for consideration in development of reduction in force policies.

The following objectives were developed to successfully complete the study:

1. Solicit existing policies from Association of Research Libraries relative to reduction in force.
2. Review the policies to identify key concepts and components.
3. Determine if administrators in Association of Research Libraries believe current reduction in force policy adequately addresses needs.

A researcher-developed questionnaire was distributed to personnel officers in Association of Research Libraries (N=93). A 63 percent return rate was achieved. In addition, policies were solicited.

Conclusions

Objectives 1 and 2 were to solicit and review RIF policies from Association of Research Libraries. Twenty-eight policy statements were received from twenty institutions, i.e., several institutions sent two policies - one for faculty one for support staff. Policies were reviewed and key concepts and components were identified and outlined in the findings section.

It is clear that most of the policies reviewed were similar in terms of content. However, many contained complex language and were difficult to understand, which could result in a challenging implementation. Although a minority, some policies contained no criteria, details, processes, or procedures; again, providing the institution with the opportunity for implementation problems. The policies were diverse in terms of length and information provided. Some of the policies were one page or less and provided minimal information. Others were pages in length and still provided minimal information. Fewer than five of the policies reviewed were considered quality documents by the researcher.

Seniority was indicated most often as the criterion utilized in the reduction in force policy. In fact, many policies indicated it was the only criterion utilized. Seniority only criterion seems indicative of the presence of a labor union or an antiquated policy. Based upon these findings, it is concluded that academic research libraries are ill-prepared to adequately meet reduction in force situations in times of severe budget constraints or under other conditions.

The next objective was to determine if library administrator's thought the current policy met the needs of the institution. When asked this question directly, the mean response was 4.5, which is between the responses neutral and agree. This would not indicate an overwhelming show of support. However, in order to meet the

needs of the institution, a policy must exist. More than 50 percent of respondents to the survey indicated they did not have a policy in place. Several respondents indicated through comments that, "They did not need a policy." This is very unrealistic considering the volatile library environment. Many factors beyond the control of the institution affect human resources. Based upon the findings, it is concluded that ARLs should develop RIF policies that include a definition, a term of notice, procedures, recall/reemployment, benefits, and placement services.

Recommendations

Planning and Preparation

The first recommendation is that ARLs should be prepared - have a policy in place. More than 50 percent of the libraries surveyed did not have a policy for *personnel layoffs and, in fact, several indicated a policy was not necessary or did not know if a policy existed.* When asked if the library is well-prepared to implement a major layoff, most were not. As stated in the review of literature, plan and prepare for a reduction in force before it occurs.

When preparing a reduction in force policy, consider the audience, i.e., who will be utilizing the document. The level of understanding employees have in regard to reduction in force should be a major consideration.

Recommended Reduction in Force Policy Components

The following outlines recommended sections and considerations to be included in a RIF for an academic library.

Definition. Outline the conditions under which a RIF would occur. Include

economic, programmatic, technological, and reorganization as components.

Notice. The number of calendar days the library must provide the employee prior to layoff. Select a time period which is most equitable to both parties involved. Two months would be the recommended time period. Six months to one year is absolutely too long. When a RIF is implemented, the organization must have the flexibility to make necessary changes in an optimum amount of time. Six months to one year does not allow this to occur.

Procedures. The recommended ranking of criteria is (1) function, (2) performance, (3) seniority, and (4) rank or title. After the RIF has occurred, the remaining employees will have additional work loads. Therefore, it is imperative to have critical functions covered first. Next the employees whose performance has been best will be needed to handle increased work loads. Seniority can be used if function and performance are equal. However, seniority alone is not an acceptable criterion for reduction in force, i.e., the measurement of seniority is the ability to maintain a position. Rank or title is meaningless as a criterion.

Those individuals with the responsibility for implementing the RIF should be identified. Their role/responsibility should also be clearly outlined. The rank order of positions that are to be affected by the RIF should also be identified, i.e., support staff only, administrative staff only, librarians only, or some combination. Also, the order of layoff of the positions affected by the RIF should be included, i.e., temporary, part-time, full-time.

Options of transfer within the organization should be defined. Individuals affected by the RIF should be allowed to transfer upward, laterally, or downward to vacant positions that are not affected by the RIF.

The individuals selected for layoff should be notified in writing. Specifically, the letter should state: why the RIF is occurring, why the individual was selected, the last day of active work, the last paycheck, and the employee's responsibilities relative to benefits, recall, and transfer. A sample letter should be provided with the policy.

Recall/Reemployment The order employees are recalled to work should be clear, e.g., last to be laid off, last to be rehired. The RIF policy should outline the term employees remain on recall status - should be for a period of at least six months. It should also include the existence of preferential hiring -- laid off employees should be pooled and given preferential consideration for hiring in vacant positions. Also, conditions should be listed under which the library can hire outside the organization if employees remain on recall status, e.g., if qualified, laid-off employees are not available. If employees in recall status are given one opportunity for rehire and refuse, they should be removed from recall status.

Benefits. The employee's and employer's responsibility should be clearly defined in the benefits section. Payment for unused leave, reinstatement of leave upon rehire, and extension of insurance should be included.

Placement Services. A complete listing of internal and external placement services should be provided. The employee's rights and responsibility should be clearly outlined.

Other Options. The next recommendation is to consider implementing mechanisms which could be considered voluntary in nature. Although these would be considered part of a RIF policy, they could be implemented in lieu of and actually prevent additional layoffs. For example, early retirement, job sharing, voluntary

layoffs, buyout, and FTE reduction. There are employees who might be interested in these options, and this would provide the organization with additional flexibility during a RIF.

Alternatives to Reductions in Force

A reduction in force policy is imperative for the academic library. However, careful planning and foresight can often lessen or eliminate implementation of a RIF. The repercussions associated with a RIF can be detrimental to the human resources of the institution. All members of an organization are affected either directly or indirectly by a RIF.

The alternative listed most often in the policies received was planned downsizing. An excellent model of planned downsizing was provided in the review of literature and several components are very applicable to academic libraries including: (1) identify ways to lower costs - minimizing non-salary and salary expenses; (2) streamline communication processes; (3) flatten the hierarchy (eliminate the number of departments); (4) focus on customer needs not internal procedures; and (5) reduce the numbers of managers, i.e., give authority to managers closest to customers and increase the number of people reporting to each manager. These are viable recommendations which can be considered even without threats of a RIF.

Further research would be helpful to ascertain how ARL libraries would like to see their RIF policies changed. Also, it would be interesting to review the planned downsizing strategies alluded to.

Implementation Process

The final recommendation is to maintain open communication at all times.

Involve staff members at all levels. Seek input from all members of the organization.

Listen carefully to what is being said as well as what is not said. Keep staffers abreast of changes and problems.

General Discussion

This study was very beneficial in terms of learning what other academic libraries are experiencing in the area of reduction in force. The policies were most useful in identifying positive and negative RIF components.

In some ways the results of the survey were disappointing. For example, many of the respondents included their business card with their reply. Most of those were very high level administrators within the library system, i.e., associate dean, human resource director. The responses associated with question 3 "The library at this institution has a short-term policy for personnel layoffs" and 4 "Librarians and support staff are governed by separate layoff policies," were somewhat confusing. That is, when asked if the library had a short-term policy in place for personnel layoffs, 35.6 percent responded affirmatively. However, when asked if librarians and support staff were governed by separate layoff policies; 57.6 percent selected yes to this question. It is questionable how the two entities can be governed by two separate policies if policies don't exist. The comments served to solidify the notion that some ARL institutions are indeed experiencing financial difficulties.

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APPENDIXES

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Date: 04-01-93

IRB#: ED-93-076

Proposal Title: GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF REDUCTION IN
FORCE POLICIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Principal Investigator(s): Garry Bice, Jackie German

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW
BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.
APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR
BOARD APPROVAL. ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO
BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

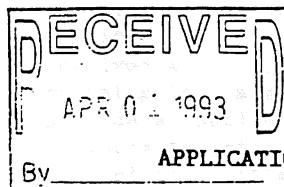
Comment:

The check box to indicate the desire for a copy of the
executive summary should be on a separate page where it can
be immediately detached from the questionnaire.

Signature:

Maria L. Tilley
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: April 5, 1993


 IRB # ED-72 C-16

By _____ APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH
(PURSUANT TO 45 CFR 46)
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Title of project (please type): Guidelines for the Development of
Reduction in Force Policies in Academic Libraries

Please attach copy of project proposal.

I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected. Additions to or changes in procedures affecting the subjects after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Dr. Garry Bice
(If student, list
advisor's name first) Typed Name

Garry R. Bice
Signature

Jackie German
Typed Name

Jackie German
Signature

Typed Name

Signature

Occupational & Adult Education
Department

Education
College

408 Classroom Building
Faculty Member's Campus Address

744-6275
Campus Phone Number

TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: ☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL BOARD
(Refer to OSU IRB Information Packet or the OSU IRB Brochure for an explanation of the types of review.)

1. Briefly describe the background and purpose of the research.

This is a thesis study designed to solicit reduction in force policies from Association of Research Libraries. A questionnaire will also be utilized to extract additional information. The data gathered will be utilized to develop guidelines for reduction in force policies for academic libraries.

2. Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Subjects must be informed about the nature of what is involved as a participant, including particularly a description of anything they might consider to be unpleasant or a risk. Please provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of the written solicitation and/or an outline of the oral solicitation.

The Association of Research Libraries personnel officers have been selected for solicitation of data. They will be contacted by direct mailing. There is nothing unpleasant or no risk is involved. Confidentiality of answers will be ascertained in cover letter (copy attached).

3. Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

NA

4. What measures or observations will be taken in the study? Include a copy of any questionnaires, tests, or other written instruments that will be used.

Attached questionnaire.

5. Will the subjects encounter the possibility of stress or psychological, social, physical, or legal risks which are greater, in probability or magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests?
Yes [] No [X] If yes, please describe.

6. Will medical clearance be necessary before subjects can participate due to tissue or blood sampling, or administration of substances such as food or drugs, or physical exercise conditioning?
Yes [] No [XX] If so, please describe.

Note: Refer to the OSU IRB Information Packet for information on the handling of blood and tissue samples.

7. Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? Yes [] No [XX]
If yes, please describe and include an outline or script of the debriefing.

8. Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? Yes [] No [XX] If yes, please describe.

9. Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading?
Yes [] No [XX] If yes, please describe.

10. Will any inducements be offered to the subjects for their participation? Yes ☒ No ☐ If yes, please describe.
If extra course credits are offered, are alternative means of obtaining additional credits available?

Offer to share information/results.

11. Will a written consent form be used? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please include the form, and if not, please indicate why not and how voluntary participation will be secured. If personnel officers participate, assume consent.

Note: The OSU IRB Information Packet illustrates elements which must be considered in preparing a written consent form. Conditions under which the IRB may waive the requirement for informed consent are to be found in 45 CFR 46.117 (c), (1) and (2).

12. Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any record that can be identified with the subject? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please explain.

13. What steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the data?

The researcher will be the only one with access to identity of institution participating. Any reference to institution in policy or on questionnaire will be deleted.

14. Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made a part of any record available to a supervisor, teacher, or employer? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please explain.
15. Describe any benefits that might accrue to either the subject or society. (See 45 CFR 46, section 46.111 (a) (2)). Reduction in force in academia is an extremely significant issue in terms of current economy, etc. Access to this information by administrators in academic libraries would be very beneficial as libraries assess personnel needs.

<u>Mel. W. Miller</u>	<u>3-29-93</u>
Signature of Head or Chairperson	Date
<u>COED</u>	<u>3-29-93</u>
Department or Administrative Unit	Date
<u>Kenneth McInley</u>	<u>3-30</u>
College/Division Research Director	Date

Checklist for Application Submission

- ☐ Proposal
- ☐ Informed Consent Form/Assent (if appropriate)
- ☐ Instrument(s) (questionnaire, survey, testing, field)
- ☐ Curriculum Vita (not necessary for Exempt review)
- ☐ Departmental/College/Division Signatures

Number of copies to be submitted:

Exempt Review: 2 copies
 Expedited Review: 3 copies
 Full Board Review: 7 copies

APPROVED 10-13-88

1993

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1993

APPENDIX B

1993

COVER LETTER, SURVEY INSTRUMENT

1993

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

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Oklahoma State University

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078-0375

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
June 1, 1993

Dear Colleague:

The ARL Statistics 1991-92 were very interesting for library human resource administrators, particularly the reference to reductions in work force, i.e., "68 percent of ARL libraries employed fewer professional support staff in 1992 than in 1991."

I serve as the personnel officer for the Oklahoma State University library and am currently reviewing our reduction in force policy. Your assistance is requested in submitting information to utilize in this review. A very short questionnaire is attached which will take approximately five minutes to complete, with little or no research required. In addition, it would be helpful if you would include a copy of your current reduction in force policy in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

I also plan to use the information gathered for a master's thesis. Please be assured that complete confidentiality will be maintained. I would be pleased to share an executive summary with you upon completion of the review. Please indicate your interest in receiving the summary on the enclosed form.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Jackie German
Senior Administrative Associate
and Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University

REDUCTION IN FORCE SURVEY

Please select the answer for each question you feel most appropriately represents the current status of your institution's academic library.

1. Library staff members are represented by a labor union, e.g., the National Education Association.

Yes

No

If yes, the name of the organization is:

_____.

2. The library at this institution has developed a long-term strategy for personnel layoffs.

Yes

No

3. The library at this institution has a short-term policy for personnel layoffs.

Yes

No

4. Librarians and support staff are governed by separate layoff policies.

Yes

No

5. The layoff policy has been utilized by the library.

Yes

No

Please circle the response you believe most appropriately reflects your opinion.

6. The current layoff policy adequately meets the needs of the library.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Strongly Disagree

Neutral

Strongly Agree

7. The library is well-prepared to implement a major layoff.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Strongly Disagree

Neutral

Strongly Agree

8. It is likely that the library will face a major layoff during 1993.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree
9. The term of notice of a layoff decision used by this library is adequate.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Neutral Strongly Agree
10. Please select statement which most accurately reflects Librarian status at your institution.
- ____ Tenure-track Faculty ____ Other (Please explain briefly)
____ Continuing (Non-academic/ Non-faculty) ____ Parallel (Academic - Non-faculty)
11. Please select all applicable criteria used in your organization's layoff process.
- ____ Seniority ____ Title or Rank
____ Function/Responsibility ____ Performance
____ Other (Please explain briefly)
12. Please indicate which of the following, if any, your organization would initiate in the event of a layoff. (You may select more than one.)
- ____ Early Retirement ____ Severance Extension
____ Job Redeployment/Retraining ____ Health Benefits Extension
____ Job Sharing ____ Salary Reduction
____ Voluntary Layoffs ____ Union/Management Committee
____ Outplacement Service (Selective) ____ Union Renegotiation
____ Outplacement Service (All) ____ FTE Reduction
____ Other (Please explain briefly)
13. Please indicate the number of weeks' notice your organization provides employees designated for layoff _____.
14. Please use the space below or on the back to provide any additional information which might aid in the development of a reduction in force policy for an academic library.

Thank you for your participation. Please attach a copy of your institution's reduction in force policy to the survey.

Yes, I would like to receive a copy of an executive summary. Please forward to:

Name: _____

Address: _____



Oklahoma State University

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078-0375

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
July 5, 1993

Dear Colleague:

On June 1, 1993, a survey was sent to you regarding reduction in force in academic libraries. To date, response has been excellent. However, I wanted to provide you with one more opportunity to participate.

If you have already returned your survey to me, thank you for your participation. If not, I would still be pleased to accept your completed survey. I would also be happy to send a replacement survey to you if you are unable to locate the original.

Again, thank you to those who participated.

Sincerely yours,

Jackie German
Senior Administrative Associate
and Graduate Student
Oklahoma State University Library

APPENDIX C

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

IN ARL LIBRARIES

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

APPENDIX C

LABOR UNIONS

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

IN ARL LIBRARIES

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED

LABOR UNIONS IDENTIFIED IN ARL LIBRARIES

AFLCIO - Communication Workers of America

AFLCIO - 925

American Association of University Professors

American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees

American Federation of Teachers

Civil Service Employees Association

Massachusetts Society of Professionals/National Education Association

Massachusetts Teachers Association

Professional Employees

Service Employees International Union

United Faculty of Florida

United University Professors

University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

VITA

Jackie Lynn German

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF REDUCTION IN FORCE
POLICIES FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC
LIBRARIES

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Kansas City, Kansas, August 1, 1957, the daughter of Jerry and Winona Wilhm. Married Maurice German October 19, 1979; two children, Carrie Lynn born August 10, 1982, and Cristie Marie born October 14, 1985.

Education: Graduated from C. E. Donart High School, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1975. Received two-year secretarial certificate from Oklahoma State University, December 1985. Graduated from Oklahoma State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in July, 1989. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree in Occupational and Adult Education in December, 1993.

Professional Experience: Employed by Oklahoma State University from July 1977 to present. Have served in a variety of clerical, secretarial, and administrative and professional positions. Currently serve as Senior Administrative Associate in the University Library. This is a professional position involved in a variety of administrative functions.